

# SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER



Fall 2016

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Elon Sustainability



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## Elon honored with national sustainability awards

Jessica Bilecki



Robert Buchholz, Jessica Bilecki and Elaine Durr attended the U.S. Dept. of Education Green Ribbon School awards ceremony.

This year, Elon University was recognized with three national sustainability awards. Elon was named a 2016 [U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School](#), was a 2016 Sustainability Awardee from APPA, previously known as the Association of Physical Plant Administrators, and received the Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Environmental Facility Certification.

Elon University was one of 11 colleges and universities in the nation to be recognized as a 2016 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Awardee and was one of eight higher education institutions to receive the APPA award.

Green Ribbon School awardees were selected from a pool of nominees for their exemplary efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs, promote better health, and ensure effective environmental education. Elon was the first postsecondary school in North Carolina to receive the designation.

Criteria for the [APPA award](#) is based on specific standards and processes

applicable to management in educational facilities, including educational curriculum and research; leadership and administration; maintenance and operations; energy and utilities; planning and construction; sustainability indicators; and sustainability innovations.

"Elon University is serving as a positive example through sustainable operations and education," said Paul Wuebold, APPA's vice president, professional affairs, and the chair of the Awards and Recognition Committee.

The [STMA certification](#) covers 10 different areas assessing storm water management, fertilization, pesticides/IPM program, recycling, composting, mowing, energy conservation, shop buildings and storage areas, irrigation and water quality testing, and educational outreach as in relation to athletic fields/complexes. For each area, Elon received a score of 80% or higher.

Additional information about Elon's sustainability initiatives can be found on the [Campus Initiatives](#) tab of the Office of Sustainability homepage.

## Phoenix Cup Energy Results for Fall 2016

This fall, Elon students, faculty and staff members pledged to conserve energy from Sept. 13 to Oct. 4. Over the course of Phoenix Cup Energy 2016, participants conserved over 3,504 pounds eCO<sub>2</sub> by committing to engage in energy-conscious behavior. Here are the winners!



### **Top 5 Student Conservers:**

Emily Fasth  
Riley Billman  
Faith Antonek  
Robyn Lane  
Kevin Hutchings

### **Top Conservation by Building:**

Apartment Style: Oaks F  
(8% reduction)  
  
Residence Style: Isabella Cannon  
Pavillion  
(5.43% reduction)  
  
Staff Building: Koury Athletic Center  
(5.28% reduction)

### **\$25 Phoenix Cash Winners:**

Robyn Lane (Student)  
Sarah Bailey (Staff)



## Mark Terrell sees sustainability as a top priority

Joelle Halle

As Elon University's Director of Utilities, Mark Terrell works tirelessly every day to make campus as sustainable as possible.

His days are full of trips across campus to address various problems. Whether it is dishwasher issues or malfunctioning solar lights, Terrell is there.

When asked about what a typical day in the life of a Director of Utilities looks like, Terrell admits that there is no such thing.

"Sometimes you think you can plan your day out, but it doesn't always happen that way," Terrell said. "A normal schedule for us is just reacting to things, and we always try to put students first."

As the director of utilities, he oversees the three major departments: electrical, heating and air, and plumbing. He and a staff of more than 20 employees work together to keep every facility on campus in tip-top shape.

A large part of that standard has to do with sustainability, which has always been at the forefront of conversations about Elon facilities. Terrell and his team do everything they can to work towards a greener future by emphasizing details like low-flow plumbing, air conditioning optimization and energy-efficient light fixtures.

"Elon has always done well to make sustainability a top priority," Terrell said. "It's always about finding a balance between our modern needs and conserving where we can."

**"We should feel proud to be a part of a green community like Elon, but there is always more to be done."**

Sometimes Elon's big picture goals are lofty, but Terrell knows that becoming more sustainable is an evolutionary process.

"Are we doing something? Yes. Are we perfect? No. Do we have goals? Yes. And we are always working towards them," Terrell said.

In Terrell's opinion, students can participate in the sustainability process in more ways than they usually think they can. Small habits like turning the lights off, taking shorter showers or making more conscious thermostat choices can add up fast.

"We always encourage students to think about how they use their spaces," Terrell said. "Instead of opening your window so it feels less stuffy in your residence hall and



*Mark Terrell is the Director of Utilities for Elon University and oversees the plumbing, heating and air, and electrical departments on campus.*

wasting hot or cold air, go outside to study. Or study in a communal space that is already being climate-controlled."

Overall, Terrell encourages students to learn more about sustainable habits and actively join the campus-wide movement to conserve.

"I want students to learn as much as possible about sustainability," Terrell said. "We should feel proud to be a part of a green community like Elon, but there is always more to be done."



*You can find Terrell running across campus on foot or in one of these electric vehicles. He is always solving problems at Elon with sustainability in mind.*

## Addressing food insecurity in Burlington

Emma Nault

Professor Michael Strickland teaches English and Environmental Studies at Elon University. He is also heavily involved in Elon's community garden and serves as a faculty mentor for student research. Caila Yates is a senior Elon College Fellow majoring in public health. Yates and Strickland are collaborating on a multi-year research project about food insecurity in Burlington, NC.

In an attempt to address food insecurity in Burlington, Yates and Strickland are focusing on neighborhoods where the Burlington Housing Authority (BHA) owns and manages properties. The BHA is an organization that provides affordable housing to families, the elderly and handicapped individuals. BHA housing is located in seven different neighborhoods, and residents eligible for BHA housing typically have low incomes.

Additionally, the BHA's neighborhoods are located within a "food desert," which is loosely defined as an area where residents do not have convenient access to large grocery stores with abundant food options.

Studies on consumer choice reflect that people of lower socioeconomic background forgo healthy options due to their cost, lack of convenience, and taste. To help increase convenience and access to healthy, affordable food, the Link Transit system now runs a route to more grocery locations. However, Strickland said, "the system hasn't yet had the impact we anticipated, but changing habits take time."

When asked if he believes BHA residents forgo healthy options due to cost, convenience, or taste, Strickland responded, "It's hard to generalize across the two featured neighborhoods; however convenience and price are always key influences. As for taste, we hope the gardens can influence new tastes by (re)introducing residents to fruits and veggies they don't normally think about—coming up with innovative, healthier ways of preparing them."

Strickland and Yates, in coordination with successive environmental senior seminar student teams, have constructed eight garden beds in two neighborhoods within BHA housing. The garden beds serve as an alternative resource for residents to incorporate plant-based foods into their everyday diets.



*These community garden beds were developed as part of Yates and Strickland's research project addressing food insecurity in the Burlington community.*

Community members have benefited from bountiful tomato and pepper harvests. Looking to the future, Strickland and Yates hope to foster continued use of the gardens by community members. Currently, senior seminar students work with community members to promote the garden as a resource for cultural life and nutritional education.

Ultimately, "The folks that live there have to organically find their own way of incorporating the gardens into their community lives," Strickland said. "We will continue to help out, but we hope that the gardens take off in their own varied directions."

To learn more about Strickland and Yates' efforts to minimize food insecurity in Burlington, you can contact them at [cyates2@elon.edu](mailto:cyates2@elon.edu) or [mstrickl@elon.edu](mailto:mstrickl@elon.edu).

## Periclean Scholars tackle food insecurity at home and abroad

The Periclean Scholars Class of 2017 will be hosting a sustainable agriculture conference to generate discussion and knowledge sharing on food security in Namibia. The conference, entitled 'Voices of Sustainability,' will take place in Windhoek, Namibia from January 23-25. Through research and conversations with Namibian officials and communities, the cohort has been able to clearly see the challenges generated by drought and lack of food security in Namibia. The Periclean Scholars Class of 2017 hopes to host a similar conference at Elon to address food insecurity in Alamance County. If you want to learn more or volunteer your time to this cause, visit [www.pericleanscholars2017.weebly.com](http://www.pericleanscholars2017.weebly.com).





# Professional development at The Washington Center

Anna Baynes



Greetings from Washington, DC! My name is Anna Baynes, and this fall semester I am participating in The Washington Center academic internship program in Washington DC. I have never done so many fun, different and unique activities while developing professionally in such a short time. As part of this program, I am interning at Cultivate the City while also taking an evening class, a leadership seminar, and attending professional development workshops.

Cultivate the City, founded by Niraj Ray, is an urban agriculture organization with several locations around Washington, DC. It has vertical gardens and rooftop gardens at its store, three schools, two additional locations, and my favorite, the rooftop garden at the Washington Nationals Baseball Park. In addition to tending the gardens, I teach gardening classes at an elementary school, help with farmers' markets, assist with special events, and work with other businesses and restaurants. I also helped build a greenhouse at a senior center. My individual semester project is to make a plan for establishing beehives and to develop related educational materials.

Washington, DC has so many professional development opportunities and everyone is willing to take time out of their schedule to help me learn more. I have attended presentations by the Organization of the American States, Green America, Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, DC Central Kitchen, National Council for Science and

the Environment, and DC Beekeepers Alliance. I have volunteered with Green America, Sierra Club, and DC Central Kitchen. Through The Washington Center I have also attended Career Boot Camp, the Simpson-Mineta Leaders Series, and the annual Washington Center Gala.

So far, my semester at The Washington Center has been the best semester of my life. There are innumerable opportunities in DC both professionally and socially. Through The Washington Center I have become friends with so many different people from all over the United States and around the world. There are always museums, festivals, restaurants and events to go to. I attended the Dakota Access Pipeline protest in front of the White House and drove a Tesla Roadster electric car at National Drive Electric Week by the National Mall. I also saw Lois Lowry, Bob Woodward, Oprah Winfrey, and President Obama. I have done so many new things and learned so much about myself in just this first month alone. I don't want this semester to end.

If anyone is interested in the Washington Center academic internship program, do not hesitate to reach out to me at [abaynes@elon.edu](mailto:abaynes@elon.edu).



*Baynes is working hard this semester to construct gardens in the Washington, DC community. She is also teaching community members how to maintain them.*



# What's Coming Up

Zimride

## Planning a road trip?

Zimride is a fun and easy way to share the seats in your car or catch a ride. You can carpool with friends, classmates, or coworkers headed the same way as you. Log on to [zimride.com/elon](http://zimride.com/elon) to save money and carbon emissions!



John Replogle



President and CEO of Seventh Generation

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Thursday, November 10 ✧ 7:30 p.m.  
Lakeside Meeting Rooms 212-214

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